United Nations ST/AI/2016/6

Secretariat

1 July 2016

Administrative instruction

Mobility and hardship scheme

The Under-Secretary-General for Management, pursuant to section 4.2 of Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2009/4, and for the purpose of implementing General Assembly resolution 70/244 and staff rules 3.13, 3.14 and 3.15, hereby promulgates the following:

Section 1
General provisions

Purpose

1.1 The mobility and hardship scheme includes the following non-pensionable allowances:

(a) A mobility incentive, which varies according to the number of assignments and the purpose of which is to provide an incentive for the geographic mobility of staff;

(b) A hardship allowance, the purpose of which is to compensate for the varying degrees of hardship at different duty stations;

(c) A non-family service allowance, the purpose of which is to recognize service in non-family duty stations.

Eligibility

1.2 Staff in the Professional and higher categories (i.e. international Professional staff), staff in the Field Service category and internationally recruited General Service staff under staff rule 4.5 shall be eligible for payment of the allowances under this scheme, provided they meet the requirements set out in section 1.3 and the particular conditions governing each allowance, as set out in sections 2, 3 and 4 below.

1.3 Eligibility for the mobility incentive under this scheme shall require an appointment to a duty station, or a reassignment to a new duty station, for a period of one year or longer, normally giving rise to a settling-in grant under staff rule 7.14. However, some of the allowances may also be paid when an assignment with payment of a daily subsistence allowance is subsequently extended to one year or

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longer, in which case the allowances may be paid as of the first day following discontinuation of the subsistence allowance.

1.4 The hardship and non-family service allowances are payable irrespective of the appointment type and duration, as provided in sections 3.2 and 4.1 below.

1.5 The allowances under this scheme are not considered expatriate benefits and may be paid to eligible staff members serving in their home country.

Category and designation of duty stations

1.6 All duty stations are placed by the International Civil Service Commission in one of six categories: H and A to E. Duty stations in category H are headquarters and similarly designated locations where the United Nations has no development or humanitarian assistance programme, or locations in countries that are members of the European Union. The A to E categories comprise all other duty stations, classified by order of difficulty of conditions of life and work. Staff are informed of the category of their duty station on an annual basis or more frequently if there is a change in classification.

1.7 For the purpose of payment of the non-family service allowance, a duty station will be designated as "non-family" by the Chair of the International Civil Service Commission where the Department of Safety and Security of the Secretariat decides that, for reasons of safety and security, all eligible dependants are restricted from being present at the duty station for a period of six months or longer.

Amount

1.8 The amount of the allowances payable to each eligible staff member may vary by grade level and depends:

(a) For the mobility incentive, on the number of assignments of a staff member;

(b) For the hardship allowance, on the hardship classification of the duty station where the staff member is serving;

(c) For the non-family service allowance, on whether the duty station has been designated a non-family duty station and the staff member has any dependants.

1.9 For the purposes of this scheme only, for Field Service staff in grades FS-1 to FS-6, the amount of the allowances referenced in section 1.8 shall be determined by reference to the amounts for staff at grades P-1 to P-3 in the Professional and higher categories. For staff members in grade FS-7, the amounts for grade P-4 in the Professional and higher categories apply.

1.10 For internationally recruited General Service staff, the amounts paid shall be the same as those for staff at the P-1 to P-3 levels in the Professional and higher categories.

1.11 When staff members eligible for payment of the allowances are on assignment or travel status and receive a daily subsistence allowance as a result, the allowances shall continue to be paid on the basis of their appointment at the parent duty station. Staff members on travel status at non-family duty stations are not eligible for payment of the non-family service allowance unless they are eligible on the basis of their appointment to their parent duty station.

1.12 When two staff members are married to each other and each is entitled to the non-family service allowance, each shall be paid at the rate applicable to a staff member without a dependant. If there are one or more dependent children, the non-family service allowance shall be paid at the rate applicable to a staff member with a dependant to the staff member in respect of whom the child or children are recognized as dependants. The same provision shall apply when one of the spouses is a staff member of another organization of the United Nations common system.

1.13 The amounts payable under the mobility and hardship scheme are set out in the annex to the present instruction:

(a) Mobility incentive (table 1);

(b) Hardship allowance (table 2);

(d) Non-family service allowance (table 3).

Section 2
Mobility incentive

Qualifying service

2.1 To qualify for payment of the mobility incentive, a staff member must have five years' prior continuous service on a fixed-term or continuing appointment[1] as a staff member in the United Nations or another organization of the common system and assigned to a category A to E duty station. When qualifying service has been broken by separation from service as defined in staff rule 9.1, such service accrued before the separation shall be forfeited and a new period shall begin upon the staff member's re-employment. Service credited towards the five-year service requirement may include service as a staff member in one of the categories eligible for payment of the allowance under section 1.2, as well as prior service in a non-eligible category when allowed under section 2.6.

2.2 At all duty stations classified in categories A to E, the mobility incentive is payable from the second assignment, provided the requirement of five years' continuous service has been met.

2.3 Service shall not be considered as broken by periods of special leave, but full months of special leave without pay shall not be credited towards the five-year service requirement.

2.4 Staff members holding temporary appointments are not eligible to receive the mobility incentive, regardless of any exceptional extension of their appointment beyond 364 days.

Determining the assignment number

2.5 For the purpose of the present instruction, the term "assignment", when determining the assignment number of the staff member, shall be understood to mean either the initial appointment of a staff member to a duty station or the transfer, reassignment or assignment of a staff member to a new duty station for a

[1] In accordance with staff rule 13.1 (a), all permanent appointments shall be governed by the terms and conditions applicable to continuing appointments under the Staff Regulations and the Staff Rules, except as provided otherwise under the same staff rule 13.1 (a)).

period of one year or longer, including duty stations classified as headquarters duty stations.

(a) Initial appointments of one year or longer, whether or not official travel was required or such appointment gave rise to a settling-in grant, and assignments of one year or longer which involve a change of duty station, shall be counted as one assignment, provided the staff member completes a minimum one-year period of service in the duty station;

(b) If a staff member is assigned to a duty station for a period of one year or longer and such time is subsequently reduced at the initiative of the Organization to less than one year, such service may be counted as an assignment on an exceptional basis.

2.6 Counting of assignments shall be made as follows:

(a) Exceptional periods of service on daily subsistence allowance for a period of one year or longer at the same duty station shall be counted as one assignment, but only upon reassignment or transfer to a new parent duty station;

(b) For staff members who were previously locally recruited in the General Service and related categories or as National Professional Officers and who become eligible for payment of the incentive upon promotion to a category eligible for such payment following a competitive examination under staff rule 4.16, all prior periods of service of one year or longer in the country of recruitment shall be counted as one assignment provided there is no break in service or separation from the organization;

(c) For locally recruited staff members in the General Service and related categories who are assigned to another duty station, or to a field mission, outside the country of recruitment and as a result become eligible for payment of the incentive, the corresponding periods of service of one year or longer shall be counted in the same manner as for staff in the Professional category. Prior service in the country of recruitment as a locally recruited staff member shall be counted as one assignment, in accordance with section 2.6 (b);

(d) For staff members who had previously served under an appointment of limited duration governed by the 300 series of the Staff Rules for a total period of at least one year and who became eligible for payment of the incentive upon conversion of the 300-series appointment, the combined periods of prior service shall be counted as one assignment;

(e) Transfers, secondments and loans to other organizations of the United Nations common system shall be counted in the same manner as movements within the Organization;

(f) Periods of service under a fixed-term appointment of one year or longer as a Junior Professional Officer/Associate Programme Officer or as an Associate Expert shall be counted, notwithstanding the provisions of section 2. Periods of service as a United Nations Volunteer shall not be counted;

(g) Periods of service on a temporary appointment shall not be counted.

Duration

2.7 After five years of continuous service at one duty station, payment of the mobility incentive will cease. The count towards the five years begins as of the effective entry on duty date of the appointment or effective start date of the assignment at the duty station, regardless of whether the staff member is eligible for the incentive at the start of the count. Periods of service away from the parent duty station on assignment or travel status shall not suspend the counting of five years. Full months of special leave without pay shall suspend the counting of five years, and the count shall resume upon return to service.

2.8 In the exceptional case of staff members who remain at the same duty station at the explicit request of the Organization or for compelling humanitarian reasons, the payment of the mobility incentive shall be payable for one additional year, but in no case for more than a total of six years.

Section 3
Hardship allowance

3.1 The hardship allowance shall be payable to eligible staff members who are assigned to duty stations classified in categories B, C, D and E from the beginning of their first assignment to any of those duty stations for the duration of their assignment to those locations.

3.2 Eligible staff members who meet the requirement in section 3.1 above shall be eligible for the hardship allowance upon taking up their first assignment, irrespective of whether they receive a settling-in grant.

3.3 If there is a change in the category of the duty station to which a staff member is assigned during the course of an assignment, an appropriate adjustment shall be made in the amount to which the staff member is entitled or the allowance shall be discontinued if no amount is payable, as of the effective date of the implementation of the hardship classification.

Section 4
Non-family service allowance

4.1 The non-family service allowance shall be payable to eligible staff members who are assigned to duty stations designated as non-family from the beginning of their assignment and for the duration of their service in a non-family duty station. No payment of the allowance shall be made when the presence of a family member is exceptionally approved, irrespective of whether other eligible family members continue to remain outside the non-family duty station. The allowance shall not be payable for the duration of the family member's presence in the duty station.

4.2 If there is a change in the designation of the duty station from family to non-family during the course of a staff member's appointment or assignment to the duty station, the non-family service allowance shall be payable as of the effective date of the change in the duty station designation.

4.3 If there is a change in the designation of the duty station from non-family to family during the course of a staff member's appointment or assignment to the duty station, the allowance shall be discontinued following a transition period:

(a) For staff members with no dependants, the allowance is discontinued three months after the effective date of change in the duty station designation;

(b) For staff members with dependants, the allowance is discontinued after three months, but may be payable for an additional three months (six months in total), following the effective date of change in the duty station designation or until an eligible family member joins the staff member at the duty station, whichever is earlier.

4.4 The non-family service allowance is not payable to staff members appointed or assigned to a duty station on or after the effective date of change in the duty station designation to family.

Section 5
Modalities of payment of the allowances

5.1 The allowances are established and shall normally be paid in United States dollars. Should the staff member request payment of salary and allowances in another currency, in accordance with the provisions of administrative instruction ST/AI/2001/1 on currency and modalities of payment of salaries and allowances, payment shall be made at the United Nations operational rate of exchange prevailing on the date the payment is made. No adjustments shall be made to account for changes in exchange rates once the payment has been made.

5.2 The allowances shall be paid on a monthly basis.

Section 6
Adjustments of payments

Adjustments or discontinuation of payments shall be made when applicable as a result of change of duty station, change of dependency status, change of designation or classification of duty station, promotion, completion of five or six years of continuous service at the duty station, as applicable, period on special leave or separation. An adjustment shall also be made if a staff member receives a special post allowance to a higher level that would bring the staff member's entitlement into another range (this would normally apply to special post allowances at the P-4, D-1 or FS-7 level), thus giving rise to a higher amount of allowances in accordance with the amounts specified in the tables in the annex.

Section 7
Relationship to other allowances and entitlements

7.1 Amounts paid on account of the mobility and hardship scheme shall not be taken into account in the calculation of the rental subsidy to which staff members may be entitled.

7.2 A staff member shall not be eligible to receive payment of the non-family service allowance while concurrently receiving the security evacuation allowance for eligible family members. Accordingly, payment of the security evacuation allowance shall cease upon payment of the non-family service allowance.

7.3 Notwithstanding section 7.2, a staff member in receipt of the non-family service allowance who is temporarily relocated or evacuated from a non-family duty

station will continue to be eligible for payment of the security evacuation allowance for himself or herself under the provisions of the security management system.

Section 8
Transitional measures

8.1 Staff members in receipt of non-removal allowance on 30 June 2016 shall continue to receive payment of the allowance for up to five years at the same duty station or until the staff member moves to another duty station, whichever is earlier.

8.2 Staff members in receipt of mobility allowance on 30 June 2016 shall continue to receive payment of mobility allowance for up to five years at the same duty station or until the staff member moves to another duty station, whichever is earlier.

8.3 In the event of any delay in implementation of the provisions of the present instruction, retroactive adjustments shall be made as appropriate.

8.4 The assignment number properly determined for purposes of the mobility allowance, as counted in accordance with the provisions of administrative instruction ST/AI/2011/6 and Amend.1, shall continue to be recognized prospectively for the purposes of the mobility incentive. The present administrative instruction shall not affect a staff member's assignment number retroactively, provided the assignment number was properly determined in accordance with administrative instruction ST/AI/2011/6 and Amend.1.

Section 9
Final provisions

9.1 The present administrative instruction shall enter into force on 1 July 2016.

9.2 Administrative instruction ST/AI/2011/6 and Amend.1, entitled "Mobility and hardship scheme", is hereby abolished.

(*Signed*) Yukio **Takasu**
Under-Secretary-General for Management

Annex

Amounts payable under the mobility and hardship scheme

(Effective 1 July 2016)

Table 1
Mobility incentive
(Annual amounts in United States dollars)

Group 1 (P-1 to P-3)

	Number of assignments			
Duty station category	*1*	*2-3*	*4-6*	*7+*
A to E	–	6 500	8 125	9 750

Group 2 (P-4 and P-5)

	Number of assignments			
Duty station category	*1*	*2-3*	*4-6*	*7+*
A to E	–	8 125	10 156	12 188

Group 3 (D-1 and above)

	Number of assignments			
Duty station category	*1*	*2-3*	*4-6*	*7+*
A to E	–	9 750	12 188	14 625

Table 2
Hardship allowance
(Annual amounts in United States dollars)

Duty station category	*Group 1 (P-1 to P-3)*	*Group 2 (P-4 and P-5)*	*Group 3 (D-1 and above)*
H	–	–	–
A	–	–	–
B	5 810	6 970	8 140
C	10 470	12 780	15 110
D	13 950	16 280	18 590
E	17 440	20 920	23 250

Table 3
Non-family service allowance
(Monthly amounts in United States dollars)

Staff member with a dependant	1 650
Staff member without a dependant	625